

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST KETCHIKAN

Marine Transportation

Annual Assessment Report

Academic Year

2017 - 2018

Prepared by:

Mike LaBarge

Assistant Professor of Maritime Studies

mslabarge@alaska.edu

(907) 228-4572

University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) Marine Transportation annual assessment report of student learning outcomes for academic year 2017-2018.

Program Overview:

The Associate of Applied Science in Marine Transportation degree is a two-year academic program designed to provide students with a broad educational and practical foundation concerning the maritime industry. Students will be prepared for employment in many sectors of the maritime industry including but not limited to; tourism, workboats, RO-RO ferries and deep sea shipping. Students who meet sea time and academic requirements will receive United States Coast Guard (USCG) and Standards of Certification and Watch Keeping (STCW) credentials. Graduates of the program who have completed appropriate sea time and course work will be qualified to serve as officers on vessels of not more than 200 Gross Registered Tons upon Near Coastal, or Inland Waters. The goal of the Marine Transportation program is to provide graduates with the credentials and general education required to excel in Alaskan waters and beyond.

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Students will demonstrate a high degree of proficiency in basic seamanship techniques.

Students will demonstrate a mastery of shipboard safety and emergency response procedures.

Students will demonstrate basic maintenance and troubleshooting of shipboard systems.

Students will demonstrate a sound knowledge of safe navigation practices.

Students will make use of appropriate reference materials regarding Merchant Mariner Credentials, licensing, and education in their chosen maritime sector.

Students will operate safely while participating in program activities and utilizing program equipment.

How Data Is Collected Concerning Student Learning Outcomes

The Marine Transportation Degree program is made up of a number of USCG-approved courses. The USCG provides a framework concerning practical competencies and academic testing in reference to the successful completion of licenses and endorsements. Those tasks, commonly referred to as “check offs” in the maritime industry, are the basis for our individual course Student Learning Outcomes. The program’s overall Student Learning Outcomes are extrapolated from those requirements. As students complete individual USCG-approved classes, they are issued a course completion certificate required to apply for USCG Merchant Mariner Credentials. The marine transportation department keeps records of these certificates, allowing us to track an individual student’s progress. Many of our students are successfully employed in the maritime industry as a direct result of the course work they have completed.

Data Collected on Student Learning Outcomes during the 2017-2018 Academic Year

The Marine Transportation department asks students to complete course evaluations at the end of every class. The faculty routinely review these course evaluations in an effort to better understand our strengths and weaknesses. The course evaluations are the primary source of information concerning the educational needs of students and industry.

Strengths:

- The Marine Transportation Degree program is unique not just to the UA system but across the state of Alaska.
- The Marine Transportation Degree program offers both an engineering and a deck emphasis.
- Strong relationships with industry statewide across all sectors of the Alaskan maritime market as reflected by a Stakeholders meeting held in 2017.
- Provides shipboard firefighting training to the USCG Buoy Tender fleet.
- Serves the needs of veterans across all branches of the armed forces.
- Serves the industry specific training needs of individual companies and organizations.
- Provides training to individuals who may not require a degree, but need specific endorsements, licenses, or simulator training to maintain or further their maritime career.
- Provides a heavy emphasis on practical hands-on training across all courses contained within the degree program. Student's course evaluations routinely site this as the most useful portion of a class.
- UAS Ketchikan houses newly renovated and updated diesel and welding labs.
- UAS Ketchikan houses a cutting edge maritime simulator available to students and industry.

Weaknesses:

- Academic Year 2016-2017 saw a high turnover in Marine Transportation staff, faculty, and adjunct faculty. Our tenure track professor position is still vacant and we are heavily reliant on adjunct faculty.
- Many potential students are working mariners, or after taking a few courses become working mariners. This means that they are often aboard ship for periods of time ranging from a few weeks to a few months, without a way to complete course work, or even easily communicate.
- There is not a clear path to transfer Merchant Mariner, Military, or industry specific credentials into equivalent UAS course credits.
- We do not have a system in place to track our students after they leave the program.
- With such a small faculty we are not able to develop new course offerings such as Advanced Fire Fighting Revalidation, Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties, or Vessel Security Officer.

Data Evaluation of Student Learning Outcomes from the Previous Academic Year:

Academic year 2017-2018 did not see any graduates of the Marine Transportation degree program. The first students were enrolled in 2017 and not enough time has passed for their completion of the degree.

Plans to Improve Student Learning:

As a result of the end of year analysis of the Marine Transportation program the following improvements are recommended:

- Hire or promote a tenure track assistant professor.

- Hire a full time Maritime Trades Lab Assistant who would aid in maintenance and fabrication of equipment, executing course logistics, and providing general support for the maritime transportation faculty and students.
- Continue to expand the adjunct professor pool.
- Develop a system of tracking student career success.
- Update materials, facilities, and equipment used during maritime courses.
- Continue to review and update individual course Student Learning Outcomes.
- Continue to review degree requirements in relation to the changing needs of industry.
- Develop a process to easily transfer Merchant Mariner, Military, or industry specific credentials into equivalent UAS course credits.
- Explore the possibility of offering course material online, or via another delivery format applicable to reaching students who are in remote locations, or working aboard ship.
- Update the maritime simulator to reflect recent advances in simulation technology.
- Explore marketing the maritime simulator to user groups outside of Alaska as a possible source of revenue.
- Hold a yearly Maritime Trades Stakeholders meeting, or a Maritime Advisory Council meeting to discuss the needs of students and industry in relation to the proposed state budget. Presently this is scheduled for April 2019.
- Develop or purchase curriculum for Advanced Fire Fighting Revalidation, Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties, and Vessel Security Officer as soon as possible.